



MR. KEVIN O'REILLY
MLA, FRAME LAKE

MAR 04 2021

Oral Question 606-19(2) Access to Internet for Students

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question raised on February 26, 2021 where I committed to providing further information on the Request for Proposal (RFP) to increase internet services by combining contracts for the Digital Communications Network, internet, and distance learning networks.

The Department of Infrastructure's (INF) Technology Service Centre (TSC) has issued a RFP to procure significantly more bandwidth at a lower cost per megabit. The savings will be used to purchase more capacity and improve overall network performance for Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) departments, education bodies, and health services. It's estimated that the combined contract would provide from two to six times the current bandwidth capacity for most Northwest Territories (NWT) communities. The satellite-served communities will not see a significant increase due to inherent latency (slow data transmission).

The RFP was issued in February 2021 for a five-year contract. The contract award is expected to occur by mid-May 2021, with a phased implementation beginning in June through December 2021. The implementation of the project will depend on the successful proponent's design and timeline required to transition from the current technical solution to the new approach.

With increased dependence on information technology and bandwidth to deliver more enhanced business solutions, online learning and health services to residents, the demand for network capacity continues to rise. It is important that the GNWT network can meet the present and future demand for programs and services.

Sincerely,

Diane Archie
Minister, Infrastructure

c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Coordinator
Executive and Indigenous Affairs